WE BELONG DEAD

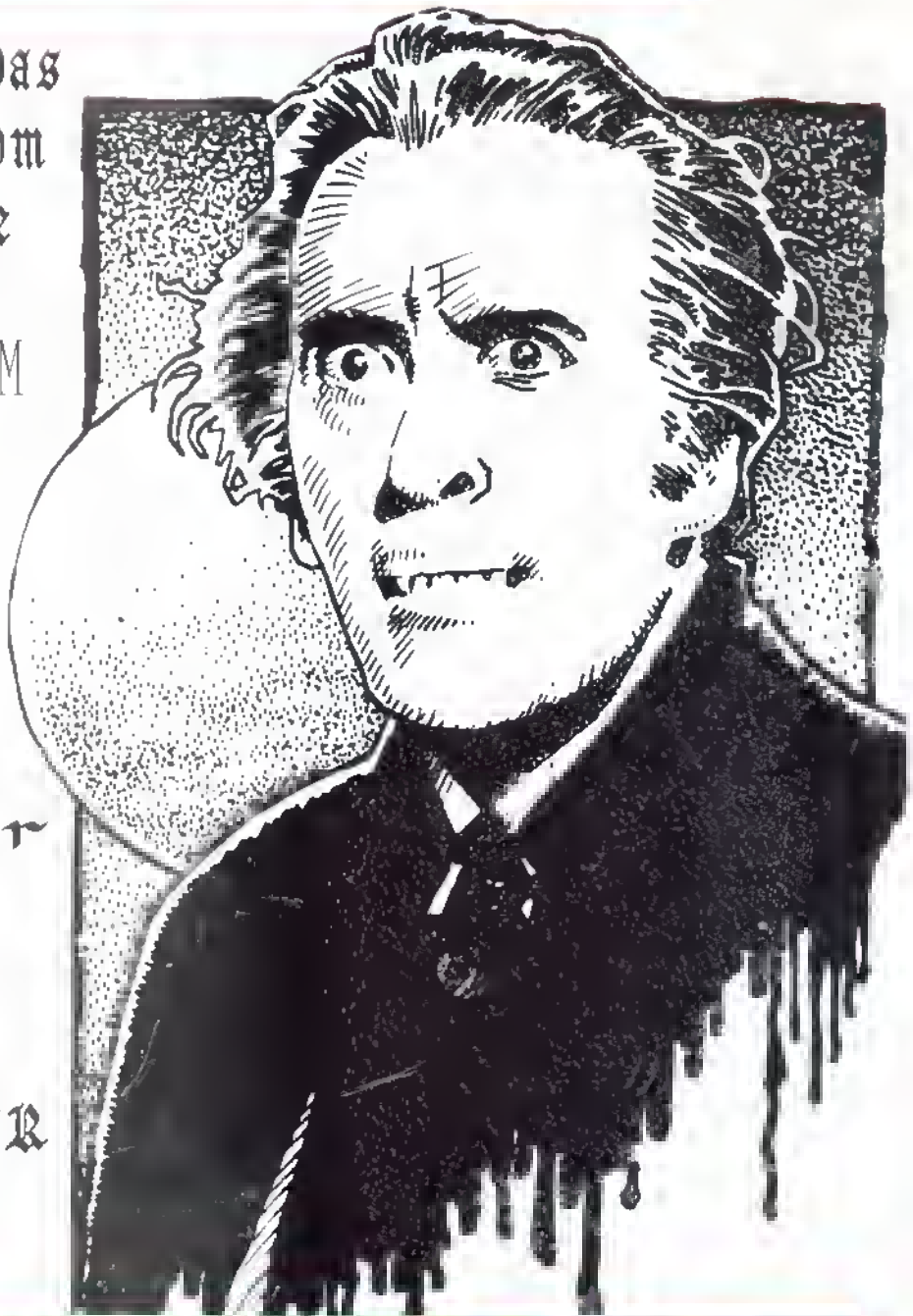
ISSUE ONE £1.50

Dracula Has Risen From The Grave

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

The Wicker Man

HAMMER ON VIDEO



Plus lots more from the Classic Age of Horror

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Christopher Lee as Dracula from ***Dracula AD 1972*** by Dave Brooks

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All contributions welcome on horror films from the 1920's to the 1970's. Send to the address below.

WE BELONG DEAD is published on an irregular basis by Eric McNaughton, 27 Ewart Road, Forest Fields, Nottingham

EDITORIAL

In the words of the immortal Lugosi 'I bid you welcome .' Welcome to a world of cobwebbed castles fog shrouded streets and eerie graveyards. Welcome to a world where Karloff was the Frankenstein monster, where Christopher Lee was Dracula and Peter Cushing was the evil Baron Frankenstein. To a world where Lon Chaney Snr lurked beneath the Paris Opera House and Lon Chaney Jnr became a wolf when the wolfbane bloomed Where Lugosi listened to the children of the night and Laughton evoked our sympathy for the unfortunate bellringer of Notre Dame

A long forgotten age when Kong ruled Skull Island and Vincent Price held sway at the Masque of the Red Death An age when Nosferatu repelled us and the Vampire Lovers attracted us When the good Dr Jekyll became the evil Mr Hyde, when Karloff became Im-Ho-Tep; when Lee battled the devil as the Duc de Richleau; when Cushing was Dr Terror and Price was abominable as Dr Phibes

Explore the House that Dripped Blood, the House on Haunted Hill, the House of Dracula and the House of Dark Shadows Once again marvel as Dracula rises from the grave, Frankenstein creates woman, the devil rides out, the House of Usher falls, the Wolfman meets Frankenstein and the zombies have a plague. . Welcome to **We Belong Dead.**

This fanzine covers the great and not so great horror films from the 20's to the 70's. This is purely a personal choice and I make no apologies for that These are the films I grew up with and influenced me If it's modern horrors you want there are more than enough fanzines elsewhere covering films of the 80's and 90's. To me the classic age of horror films ended in the 70's That's not to say there weren't any good horrors made in the 80/90's - just look at ***Day of the Dead, Alien, The Thing, Silence of the Lambs, Cape Fear*** et al

But what can match the excitement of staying up late on a Friday night to see Karloff's ***Frankenstein*** or Raines ***Phantom of the Opera***. Later on in my childhood I was introduced to the delights of Hammers horrors

So enjoy this first issue, let me know what you think and as Dr Pretorius said in **Bride of Frankenstein**, Here's to a new world of gods and monsters

ATMOSPHERIC HORROR

A clap of thunder, a waterfall of rain and wind howling louder than the wolf over the hill. The stuff that horror movies are really made of. As modern films concentrate on exploding heads and stretching skin, so Dracula wouldn't be complete without the gothic castle and terrified villagers.

Universal, Hammer and practically every horror movie before 1970 required a large slice of atmosphere to chill the audience in the midnight hour (somehow a gothic film viewed via the video medium in mid-afternoon doesn't give the same effect). Lugosi's Dracula stalking amongst the castle's ruined stones in wonderous black and white seems far more unsettling than the realistic films of today set in apartment blocks. There are, of course, exceptions, for example the house in FRIGHT NIGHT has all the classic elements, down to windows which allow the sunlight to swarm onto the vampire, reminiscent of Hammer's original count. But there just seems to be something special about the classical sets which made performances by Lugosi, Karloff, Lee, Cushing and to some extent Price shine so well.

Even the streets of London haunted by Mr Hyde have a distinctive chill which surrounds them and the countryside around Frankenstein's lair is dark enough to house any creature of the night. Even the Mummy had an atmospheric tomb and swamp. Roger Corman's FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER had the classic gothic home and his THE PIT AND THE PENDULUM torture chamber put the audience in the right frame of mind to savour the full drama of subsequent events.

The sets allow a sense of theatre absent from many of the more graphic movies. You can instantly tell if a Dracula film is a Hammer or not by the atmosphere and feel of the opening sequences. The fact that atmosphere has been used so well for so long proves the importance which it holds for true horror of gothic films (or indeed novels). Even Chaney's Phantom had a brilliant lair and the effect can be seen in many of today's films. Who could forget the remote moor where the werewolf first struck in AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON and how much horror takes place in the rain and wind.

But however hard they try, the modern films could never recapture atmospheres past like Hammer or Universal, whether it is Frankensteins lab or a vampires tomb, they captured them best.

Paul Benton

Dracula Has Risen From The Grave

A Review by Gary Sherratt

Hammer's third Dracula movie and this time great Terence Fisher, the director of the first t.. classics was not involve.. This time Freddie Francis took over the directors chair. Francis created a brilliant piece of Gothic horror cinema, a movie which has been underrated and much neglected.

Jo.. ..er (a pseudonym o.. ..nthony Hinds) produced a .. literate script, which is, in my opinion, slightly better than ***Dracula Prince of Darkness*** (1966) which he also wrote.

Dracula is revitalised by a clumsy priest (Ewan Hooper) who is climbing the mountain to Castle Dracula with the Monsignor (Rupert Davies) to exorcise it of the Count's evil spell, which has already resulted in the death of a woman in the opening scene of the movie. The priest slips while climbing, falls and is wounded, blood from his wound trickling onto the frozen stream where Dracula is entombed, thus reviving the Count. After the usual chases and neck biting Dr.cula is destroyed by the film's he.. Paul (Barr.. ..ndrews) who ... ... from ... castle battleme.. to be dramatically impale.. on a large crucifix.

As I have mentioned, the script is lite.. in the context of religious beliefs and prevalent icons, this theme also runs parallel with an atheistic message in the form of Paul, made evident when Paul, who is courting Maria (VeronicaCarlson),theMonsignors grand-daughter, has a theoretical discussion with the Monsignor on religion.

However, Paul's beliefs prove near fatal when he has a chance to destroy Dracula

with a well placed stake. But at the crucial moment he refuses to pray to God to make his strike decisive allowing Dracula to rise from his resting place with the stake in his heart, which he proceeds to remove, thus he is able to carry on with his evil deeds

"DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE"

Christopher Lee protested vigorously about this scene at the time. "Everyone knows a stake through a vampires heart is the very end of a vampire" he said. The debate raged for a time but lee was eventually overruled and the scene survived which is just as well because it creates a truly atmospheric scene.

The apocalyptic finale of the movie is dramatic, with Dracula impaled on the large cross,screaming at the top of his voice and tears of blood streaming from his eyes. This vision of horror is stunning and it's interesting to note that while this scene was being filmed a delegation arrived at the Elstree studios to present Hammer with the Queen's Award for Industry The sight and sounds that greeted them must have given them second thoughts!

Rupert Davies provides the viewer with an interesting nemesis to Dracula which he conveys with conviction and charm. Although Peter Cushing is sadly missing in his most memorable role as Van Helsing, Rupert Davies makes up for this omission. Chris Lee, in my opinion, will always be the definitive Count Dracula, a role he

Above: *Dracula meets his gory end impaled on a giant crucific*
Below: *Dracula (Christopher Lee) is repelled by the Monsignor's (Rupert Davies) cross as Maria (Veronica Carlson) looks on*

has made his own with his graceful sexual and menacing portrayal, but it was a pity he was given very little dialogue, which was a failing of the later sequels.

Maria, played by the beautiful Veronica Carlson (once described by Peter Cushing as "a beautiful piece of export") is Dracula's intended victim. She plays the role convincingly and with sexuality, as by now Hammer were injecting more sex into their movies. In this film it is made evident by Dracula's seduction of his victims, including Zena (Barbara Ewing) who greets his advances with semi orgasmic delight. Of course in coming years even more sex and nudity was injected into the Hammer movies.

The sets created by Bernard Robinson (a Hammer regular in the 60's he created and built many beautifully gothic sets for the company) are stunning in there gothic nature, in particular the roof top scenes in the village are truly stunning matte paintings all brought to realistic life by Arthur Grant's photography using camera filters.

Dracula Has Risen From the Grave is a great gothic movie and should be given more credit in the annals of horror movie history, it is well directed and well acted, far better so than many of today's gore movie dross

THE STORY OF A COLLECTOR

How well I remember that Saturday afternoon in 1974 when my mum popped into our local paper shop to get the local newspaper. I went to look at the American comics on their stand to see if there were any new issues of ***House of Mystery*** or The ***Witching Hour.***

Suddenly I was confronted by a huge colour photo of Christopher Lee as Dracula, red eyes blazing, staring out at me from the cover of a new poster magazine. In no time at all I had handed over 20p and hurried home to savour the delights of ***Monster Mog*** number 1. From that day I was hooked.

I was soon scouring the local comic shops for anything on horror movies. My next discovery was a magazine called ***World of Horror***. Both ***World of Horror*** and ***Monster Mog*** were printed on glossy paper with full colour photos, much superior in quality to their American counterparts.

Although ***Monster Mog*** had very little text it didn't seem to matter as the photos were brilliant. Even today I can't help watching a Hammer film without recognising a scene or two featured in ***Monster Mog***. The magazine (***MM***) lasted for 17 issues before suddenly it stopped appearing at our newsagents. ***World of Horror*** was a lot more informative with once again some great photos. Only fellow addicts can understand the thrill of finding a new monster magazine, or better still an old one!

One of my best friends in those days was our postman! I'd eagerly await the latest package full of old ***Famous Monsters*** or ***Monster Worlds*** I'd bought from contacts all over the country.

My collection grew by leaps and bounds: ***Quasimodo's Monster Magazine***, ***Legend Horror Classics***, the superb if short-lived ***Monsters of the Movies*** by Marvel, Mad ***Monsters***, ***Castle of Frankenstein*** et al.

Perhaps one of the best of the lot was ***House of Hammer*** which first appeared on the scene in October 1976. Published by Top Sellers and edited by Dez Skinn, the people who brought out ***Monster Mog***, it took a whole new approach by having a comic adaption of a Hammer film every issue. After issue 18 the magazine changed its title to ***House of Horror***, but after 2 further issues suffered another title change to ***Hells of Horror***. The magazine disappeared for ages after number 23 but was eventually relaunched by Quality Communication who dropped the Hammer comic strip adaptions. It eventually bit the dust with issue 30 in 1984.

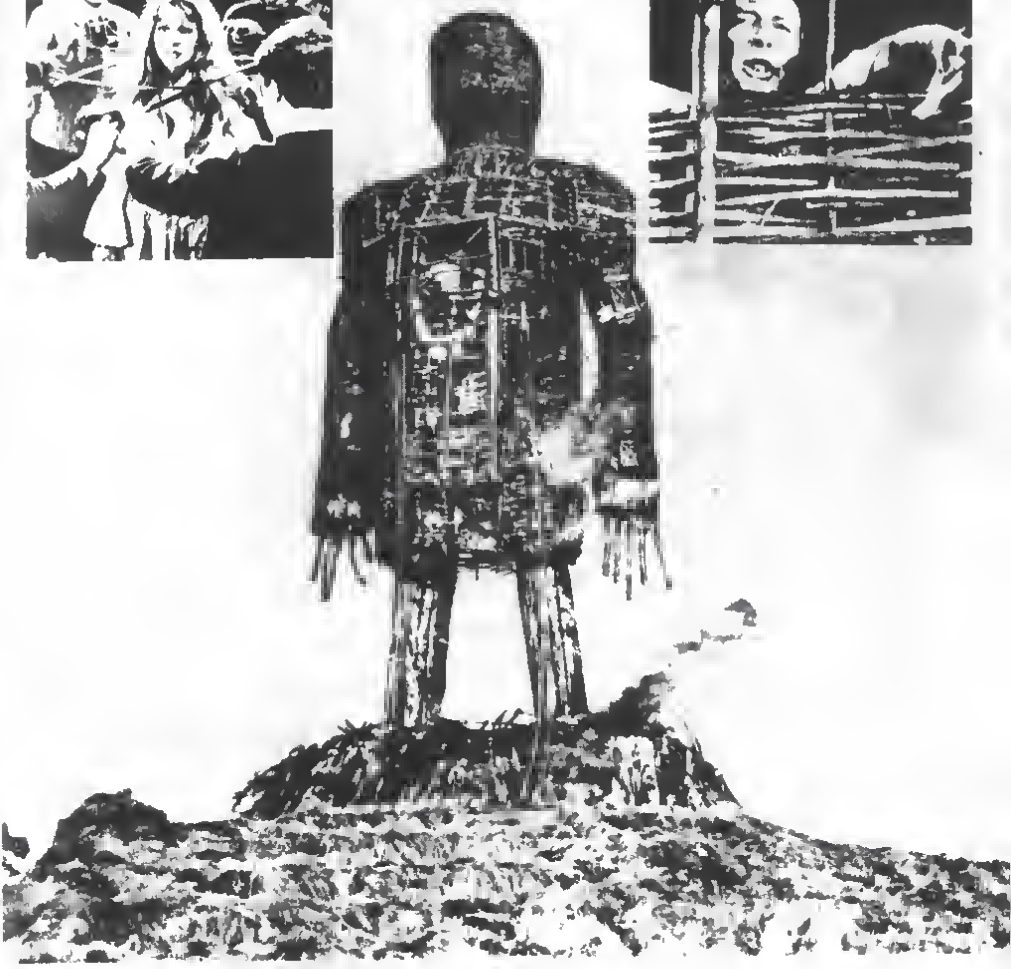
On the American side the grandaddy of them all, ***Famous Monsters*** finally finished with number 191 after Forry Ackerman left Warren. The longest running American magazine is now ***Fongoria*** (who produced a beautiful centenary issue), but I'm sure I'm not the only one who yearns for those great cover paintings of Karloff, Cushing, Kong etc, and more articles about our past. Ah well!

Eighteen long years have passed since that 12 year old boy was first introduced to the delights of monster movie magazines. A lot has happened since then - I'm now 30 and work as a printer, I've a wonderful partner, Jos, a mortgage and a cat called Oscar!

But there I am, still scouring the comic fairs searching for that old issue of ***Famous Monsters*** I still need, still eagerly waiting for the postman to deliver the latest package of delights. There really is no thrill like it. May I have many more years collecting to look farward to.

Eric McNaughton.

How did you get started collecting magazines & watching horror movies. Write in and let us know.



The Wicker Man

Directed by Robin Hardy 1973
Cast: Edward Woodward, Christopher Lee, Diane Cilento, Britt Ekland, Ingrid Pitt, Lindsey Kemp.

A film which deserves its 'cult' status, ***The Wicker Man*** is the story of the clash of two religions, the new, as embodied by Christianity, and the old religions which have been around for thousands of years.

The story concerns Sergeant Howie (Edward Woodward) who arrives at the remote Scottish island of Summerisle in search of a missing girl, Rowan Morrison. He is met with silence and evasiveness every where he turns and his strict Christian beliefs are outraged at what he sees on the island.

In one very amusing scene Howie complains to Lord Summerisle (Christopher Lee) about the local schoolgirls who are jumping over a fire. "They're naked" exclaims Howie. "Naturally" replies Summerisle, "It's much too dangerous to jump through a fire with your clothes on".

As the film progresses Howie becomes convinced that the islanders intend to sacrifice Rowan to their primitive gods to ensure their harvest doesn't fail a second time.

In fact it is all a clever trick (the screenplay is by Anthony Shaffer who is particularly fond of keeping audiences guessing - just look at his play *Sleuth*) for Howie himself is to be the sacrifice. In the end Lord Summerisle turns Howies Christian beliefs back on him. "I believe in Jesus Christ and the life eternal" screams Howie, to which Summerisle replies "That is good, for believing as you do we bestow upon you a rare gift these days - a martyrs death"

The Wicker Man of the title is actually based on fact as director Robin Hardy explained. "The Druids used the structure to burn their sacrificial victims. Historically the first mention of it is in Julius Caesar's *Diaries* in 55BC, when he noted Roman prisoners of war were taken by the British tribes and burned as sacrifices"

Such was their commitment to the project that Christopher Lee, Robin Hardy and Anthony Shaffer did the whole thing for no money. Lee himself has said that Lord Summerisle was the best part he'd ever played. "It was a brilliant script with wonderful lines. What more can an actor ask for?".

Scriptwriter Shaffer is a great lover of horror films, but he didn't want the story of paganism set in the Middle Ages, believing a contempory setting would make it all the more horrifying. "It seemed to me to be a subject that I have never seen treated properly" he said in ***Cinefantastique***, "with the Hobby Horse, the Teaser, the Punch or Fool figure, the Golden Bough, or the Sacred Oak myths, the force that intervenes in life, sometimes it demands a sacrifice, sometimes it doesn't.....I thought there was so much there in Celtic mythology that no one has

Lord Summerisle leads the singing as Howie burns

Lord Summerisle offers libation to the gods of the sea

ever laid a glove on, and I thought it was about time that someone did".

Although the story is based on the small island of Summerisle it was actually shot in 25 wide ranging locations The fact that you never for one moment notice this is testament to a well edited film Even Lord Summerisle's castle is a trick The inside is Lord Stairs castle at Wigtown while the exterior is Culzean Castle in Ayr, 40 miles away. There is actually a real Summerisle although it doesn't appear on most maps and as Peter Snell of British Lion commented "is probably inhabited by two men and a goat".

The biggest problem during filming was the British weather Although the film is supposed to be set in Spring it was actually filmed in October and november. During the final sequence on the cliffs where the islanders sing as Howie burns, everyone was freezing, especially poor Edward Woodward who was wearing only a light shirt

For the climatic scene Art Director Seamus Flannery built three Wickermen based on Robin Hardy's designs. Two were full sized, 60 feet high and one was just a large size trunk that was used for close-up filming

Once filming had finished the problems really started British Lion were not quite sure what they had on their hands What eventually emerged after much cutting was a 102 minute version This was not received well, especially by Christopher Lee who complained that a lot of the dialogue and story elements had gone

This was bad enough but then British Lion was sold and all the creative talent connected with *The Wicker Man* were locked out of the studios with no access to the film

The new managing directors saw no value in the film commercially and refused to release it in this country It was sent to Roger Corman in America for his opinion and Corman recommended a number of cuts The film then ended up with a running time of 87 minutes Gone were the opening scenes of Howie at mass Gone also was Howie's first night on Summerisle, where Lee presents a suitor for Willow (Britt Ekland), th innkeepers daughter Instead Willows provocative dance to Howie, in the next room, was substituted, thus giving the impression that Howie was on the island only one night

This new version was released on a double bill with Nicholas Roeg's ***Don't Look Now.*** The people involved in the making of the film knew nothing of this and were appaled at what they saw. "The film was just butchered" said Christopher Lee,"It was in a form that just didn't make any sense". Despite this the film received very good reviews and in 1974 won the Grand Prize at the 3rd Festival of Fantastic Films in Paris.

The Wicker Man is a truly original horror film and if you get the chance try to see the longer version which the BBC showed recently. The 87 minute version is available on Warner Home Video.

Eric McNaughton

We welcome any articles on what you, the readers, regard as your favourite film or actor. Please send ideas, articles, artwork etc. to Eric McNaughton, 27 Ewart Road, Forest Fields, Nottingham

Christopher Lee as Lord Summerisle

VIDEO VIEW

Each issue we'll take a look at a particular classic available on video. This issue we look at two versions of ***The Phantom of the Opera***.

Lon Chaney's masterpiece has recently be re-released on video. Remastered and with a musical score by Rick Wakeman, it brings a classic of the 20's into the 90's.

Unfortunately, the modern music (a la ***Metropolis***) doesn't always suit the film and I found a lot of the time it was better to watch it with the sound turned down. The different scenes are in different colour tones with the Masqued Ball scene in hand painted 2 colour technicolour.

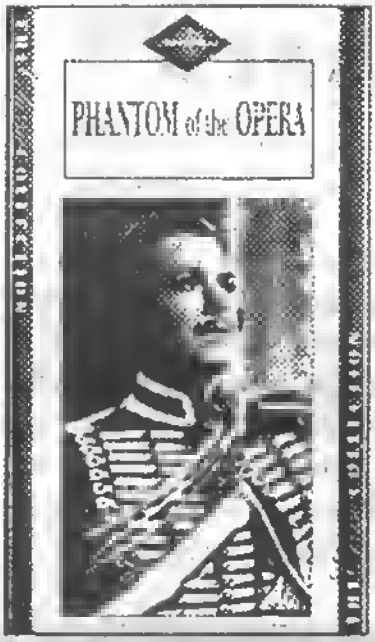
All the memorable scenes are there: the unmasking: the Red Death at the Ball

and the final chase past the still standing sets of Chaney's earlier success ***The Hunchback of Notre Dame***. There's also a nice little introduction by Christopher Lee under the Paris Opera House. No serious horror buff can be without this classic.

Available on RTV Video (RTV 101).

Universals lush technicolour remake of their silent version is a joy to look at. Unfortunately the story is nowhere near as good as the Chaney version.

The Phantom this time is played by Claude Rains as an acid



scarred violinist at the Paris Opera House. Rains gives a sympathetic portrayal as Erique Claudin, but his briefly seen scarred face is dissapointing compared to Chaney's grotesque make-up.

Gone is the masked ball and the final chase, but the scene where Rains saws through the chandelier is a classic.

Sadly this version has not enough Phantom and too much opera, and the film is more a vehicle for the talents of Nelson Eddy. Universal used many of the sets used in the Chaney version.

Despite all the drawbacks, the film holds some very fond memories for me as it was one of the first horror films I was ever allowed to stay up late to watch on TV, leading me to buy the glow in the dark Phantom of the Opera model by Aurora. So I'll always be grateful to this film which started my 18 year love affair with the horror cinema.

Available on CIC Video's 'Classic Collection' (VHR 1517)

Eric McNaughton

QUOTH THE RAVEN...

Here's an easy quiz for the first issue. Next issue there will be prizes but the questions will be harder. Just say where the following quotes come from & who said them. Answers at the bottom of the page.

1 We belong dead

2 I thought the world had seen the last of you

3 Here's to a son of the house of Frankenstein

4 Here we go gathering nuts in May

5 To die to be really dead that must be glorious

6 What is the law? Not to shed blood. Are we not men?

7 He went for a little walk

8 The goat of Mendez, the Devil himself

9 Apogi satana

10 Behold my 4 horsemen of the apocolypse

ANSWERS

1 Boris Karloff as the moaner at the climax to Bride of Frankenstein2 Simon Ward in Peter Cushing in Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed3 The old Baron in Frankenstein:4 Claude Rains skipping down a lane in The Invisible Man5 Bela Lugosi in Dracula6 Lugosi again as the lavagiver in Island of Lost Souls7 Bramwell Fletcher in The Mummy8 Christopher Lee in The Devil Rides Out9 Joe Fitch reading off Ingrid Pitt in The Vampire Lovers10 Christopher Lee in Peter Cushing in the Satanic Rites of Dracula

DARK TERRORS

Highly recommended is a new fanzine called Dark Terrors. Dealing exclusively with Hammer, the premiere issue is a labour of love by fan Mike Murphy. The main article is a look at Hammer's adaptions of Dennis Wheatley's works (***The Devil Rides Out, The Lost Continent and To the Devil a Daughter***). There's also a review of an interview with that gentleman of horror, Peter Cushing, the first part of an episode guide to the ***Hammer House of Horror*** TV series, an appreciation of the music of James Bernard and an article on Jaqueline Pearce. All in all well worth £1.50

A Hammer Fanzine

DARK TERRORS - Issue Two - March 1992

Includes The Curse of the Werewolf, Ralph Bates, The Tales of Frankenstein, Hammer House of Horror TV series, Hammer at Oakley Court, Letters, News and more!

For your copy please send £1.50 and one 36p stamp to: Mike Murphy, 'Avalon', Ventnor Terrace, St. Ives, Cornwall. TR26 1DY
Please make cheques/PO's payable to M. MURPHY

HAMMER HOUSE OF HORROR MARKETING

Great news for all Hammer fans! A new company called Hammer House of Horror Marketing is set to launch a series of vinyl models of all your favourite Hammer characters. The company is run by Gary Wilson, a great horror film fan, and Dave Prowse, who shouldn't need any introduction to Hammer fans.

The first kit to be launched in June will be a 15 and a half inch model of Christopher Lee as Count Dracula. This will be followed by Oliver Reed from Curse of the Werewolf and Dave Prowse himself as the creature from Frankenstein and the Monster from Hell.

Future figures will include the Gorgon, the Reptile, Ingrid Pitt from The Vampire Lovers, Chris Lee's Mummy & the monster from Curse of Frankenstein. The Chris Lee Dracula will sell for £34.95 which is great value compared to the prices asked for American kits.

Gary and Dave eventually plan to produce masks, trading cards, t-shirts etc and we wish them all the very best with their venture. As soon as we have further details we'll let you know.

Christopher Lee as Dracula (from 'Scars of Dracula') will soon be available in kit form

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

A look back at a silent classic

by Eric McNaughton

STORY

The Paris Opera House, centre of culture in the city of culture. Beneath this imposing edifice lies the dungeons and torture chambers of medieval Paris. In these catacombs dwells a spectre - the Phantom. The only person ever to have seen the Phantom is the scene shifter Joseph Buquet. "His eyes are so deep" says Buquet, "that you can hardly see the fixed pupils. All you see is two big black holes, as in a dead man's skull. His skin, which is stretched across his bones like a drumhead, is not white but a dirty yellow."

Erik the Phantom (Lon Chaney), lives only for his music and for his 'angel' Christine Daae (Mary Philbin). Box 5 at the Opera House is always left empty for the Opera Ghost.

When the new managers of the Opera House let out the Phantom's box and refuse to Christine sing instead of La Carlotta, he wreaks a terrible vengeance. As he sends the giant crystal chandelier crashing into the audience he tells the managers "Behold! She is singing to bring down the chandelier!"

Admist the confusion the Phantom spirits Chrisine away to his subterranean lair. "There he plays her his own composition 'Don Juan Triumphant'. Christine is intrigued by the masked composer and while he is at the organ she rips off his mask. Recoiling in horror at the deaths head before her, the Phantom cries "Feast your eyes, glut your soul on my accursed ugliness!" After promising to keep his secret she is allowed to return to the surface.

The following evening is the Opera's Masqued Ball. "One night each year, all Paris mingled, forgetful of caste, the merry, mad Bal Masque de l'Opera" Into the midst of the revelry strode a spectral figure robed in red. It is the Phantom as the embodiment of the Red Death. He castigates the revellers. "Beneath your dancing feet are the tombs of tortured men - thus does the Red Death rebuke your merriment!" Later unknown to Christine the Phantom clings to the statue of Apollo on the Opera rooftop, his cloak billowing around him, as she betrays him to her lover Raoul de Chagny (Norman Kerry).

The Phantom abducts Christine again and takes her below the Paris Opera House. Raoul, with the help of the mysterious Persian (Arthur Edmund Carewe) who is on the trail of the Phantom, follow. The Phantom, however, is too clever and traps them in his torture chamber.

In order to save them Christine agrees to marry the Phantom. They are suddenly interrupted

by a mob who have penetrated the Phantom's kingdom

The Phantom flees, pursued by the mob, racing past Notre Dame, he is cornered on the banks of the Seine. Holding the crowd at bay by pretending he has a hand grenade, he opens his hand to show it is empty, and the mob is upon him. The Phantoms body is thrown into the Seine and sinks below the surface.

BEHIND THE SCENES

Lon Chaney's Phantom of the Opera is a true classic of the silent cinema comparable to D.W.Griffith's Intolerance or Charlie Chaplin's Gold Rush.

Certain scenes still stand out after 67 years. the Phantom's appearance at the masqued ball as Edgar Allan Poe's 'Red Death' resplendent in crimson cloak and grinning skulls mask; the Phantom on the roof of the Opera House listening to Christine betraying him to Raoul, his cloak billowing in the wind, and of course the famous unmasking scene.

Chaney had created many memorable 'monsters' in such films as Treasure Island (1920), The Monster (25) and The Unholy Three (25), earning himself the nickname 'Man of a Thousand Faces'. In 1923 Carl Laemmle, the head of Universal Pictures, had lured Chaney from MGM to star in The Hunchback of Notre Dame, and it was to Universal that he was to return for perhaps his greatest performance that of Erik, the hideously deformed Phantom.

The film is based on the novel by Gaston Leroux, written in 1911 and it was only by chance that this forgotten book became world famous through the medium of cinema. It was discovered by a researcher at Universal who was looking for a suitable vehicle for their star attraction, Lon Chaney.

It remains one of the most remembered films of the silent era. Universal spared no expense on the film, recreating the inside of the Paris Opera House and the maze of catacombs that made up the Phantom's underground domain.

The set was closed during the filming so no-one could get a look at Chaney's make-up. There were persistent director troubles. Although Rupert Julian is credited as director, Chaney himself directed some of the film and after a falling out the film was finished by Edward Sedgwick.

Adapted by Elliot J. Clawson from Leroux's novel the screenplay omits the Persian prologue which leaves viewers wondering who the mysterious middle eastern detective is.

The unmasking is a double shock for audiences. To viewers in the 90's who have seen gore galore it may seem pretty tame but at the time it caused an outrage. Women fainted and as Carlos Clarens stated "Whether reported faintings in the audience were real or dreamed up by

Right: *The Red Death enters the Masqued Ball*

Above *The famous unmasking scene*
Right *The phantom flees from the mob in the films finale*

Universal, Chaney's characterisation was everything the public had come to expect of him"

To achieve the hideous visage of the deformed Phantom, Chaney used false teeth, wires which were forced into his nose and eye sockets and tape to drag back his nose, exposing his nostrils. The addition of celluloid discs to distort his cheekbones and wire prongs to draw back the corners of his mouth completed the gruelling make-up.

Chaney himself was modest when discussing his extraordinary skill. "In The Phantom of the Opera people exclaimed at my weird makeup" he said. "I achieved the Death's Head of that role without wearing a mask. It was the use of paints in the right shades and the right places - not the obvious pans of the face - which gave the complete illusion of horror. I've never worn a mask in my life, save at Halloween parties. It's an art but not magic"

Amazingly for a silent film some of the scenes were in colour. Albeit primative compared to today's sophisticated colour process during the 20's they were a sensation. A lot of the colour in the film appears in the grand opera scenes. But the most outstanding colour scene remains the Masquerade Ball where Chaney's Red Death burst upon the green revellers in brilliant red.

The British film critic Milton Shulman wrote in 1975 "My most horrific moment in the cinema came when I first saw Lon Chaney spinning round from his playing of the organ at the Paris Opera to display his fanged corroded skull like visage to Mary Philbin who, as Christine had dared unmask him". That tingling hair-on-end experience has lived with me for almost 50 years.

Certainly the unmasking scene has come down through the decades and remains one of the classic images of the cinefantastique on a par with Karloff's first appearance as the Frankenstein monster, Kong atop the Empire State Building and Christopher Lee and Peter Cushing battling it out at the finale of Hammer's Dracula.

There could be no more fitting epitaph than that.

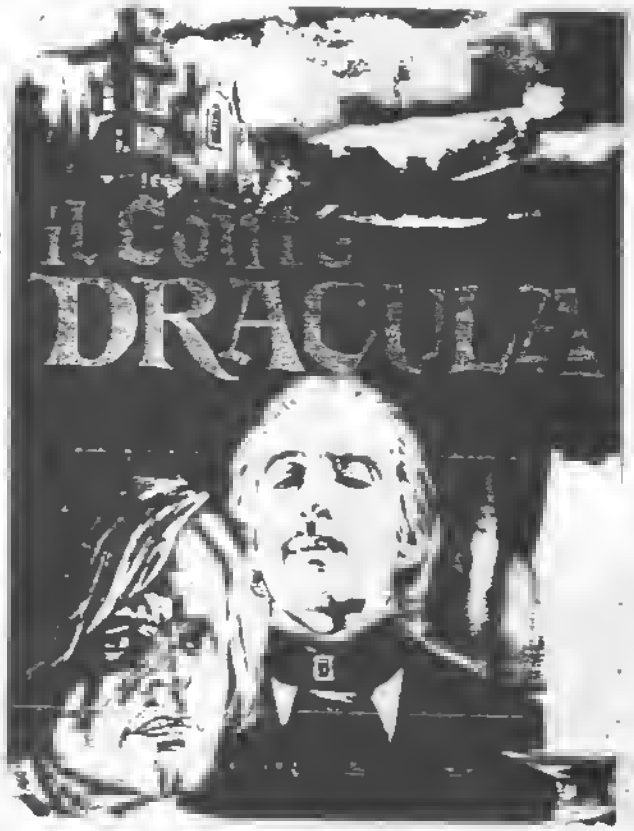
BRAM STOKER'S COUNT DRACULA

Directed by Jess Franco
1970 Cast: Christopher Lee, Herbert Lom, Klaus Kinski, Maria Rohm, Jack Taylor

This film may be a lot of things but it certainly is <u>not</u> Bram Stoker's ***Dracula***. About the only part that remains faithful to the original is the opening section set in Transylvannia.

Although for a change Christopher Lee does actually portray the Count as Stoker described him, grey hair, moustache and all. And he has more to say in this film than in all seven Hammer Draculas put together.

Once the film moves away from Dracula's castle it goes downhill and becomes very bizarre indeed. For example, Jonathan Harker, last seen leaping out of Castle Dracula's windows, wakes up in Van Helsing's mental asylum (!) in London. He asks Dr Seward how he got there, to which Seward replies that Harker was found in a stream near Budapest! What are we to deduce from this? That Harker floated back to England?! And why is he in a mental hospital? (Try to ignore the fact that most of the characters act like they belong there).



CHRISTOPHER LEE

The late Klaus Kinski plays Renfield, wildly chewing up the scenery and coming across as about the sanest person in the entire film. And Herbert Lom is completely wasted as Van Helsing. He never goes anywhere and ends up having a heart attack, although in the version I saw this wasn't explained till later, leaving me with the impression that Van Helsing was the biggest lunatic of all!

After his heart attack he ends up in a wheelchair, though after a couple of scenes this is quickly discarded when he can miraculously walk again. At one point Van Helsing even enlists the support of the Home Secretary. Now I know that government ministers are all complete idiots, but surely no Home Secretary would ever believe that the country was under threat from a vampire!

In a film full of bizarre scenes, the weirdest of all occurs when Harker, Seward and Quincey Morris (yes at last a Dracula film featuring Quincey Morris) track the Count to Carfax Abbey. They are suddenly confronted by a room full of stuffed animals (I kid you not) that suddenly start swaying to and fro accompanied by a soundtrack that sounds like radio interference. Just what the hell these stuffed animals are going to do is anyones guess. There's even a stuffed ostrich! Now I ask you seriously, what fearless vampire hunter is going to be scared by a stuffed ostrich?

Jess Franco seems to be obsessed with zooming his camera in and out of scenes, and everybody moves so bloody slow that I was tempted to watch the whole film in fast forward.

If you love Stoker's novel keep well away from this film and stick to Hammer's Dracula movies, which at least were fun.

Eric McNaughton

HAMMER

ON VIDEO

To those of us who are great fans of Hammer films, the video was a godsend. No longer do we have to wait for months for our favourite Hammer film to appear on our local TV station (usually in the early hours of the morning!). We can now watch them when and where we like.

The sad thing is that not all Hammer's horror films are yet available on VHS. The problem with the films is that the distribution rights aren't owned by Hammer Films. This means that whereas ***Dracula Prince of Darkness*** through to ***The Satanic Rites of Dracula*** are available, the first of the series, ***Dracula***, is not.

Likewise the availibility of Hammer's Frankenstein series is patchy. You can get ***Curse of Frankenstein, Revenge of Frankenstein, Frankenstein Created Woman*** and ***Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed*** but not ***Evil of Frankenstein, Horror of Frankenstein*** or ***Frankenstein and the Monster From Hell***.

Similarly, you'll be lucky to find Hammer's superh ***Vampire Lovers***, whereas the vastly inferior sequel ***Lust for a Vampire*** can be picked up at most video shops.

The Warner Brothers series is about the largest collection of Hammer films available on a single label. The collection comprises ***Dracula Prince of Darhness, Dracula Has Risen From The Grave, Taste the Blood of Dracula, Scars of Dracula, Dracula AD 1972, The Satanic Rites of Dracula, Frankenstein Must Be Destroyed, Quatermass and the Pit, The Devil Rides Out, Lust for a Vampire, Dr Jekyll & Sister Hyde*** and ***Curse of Frankenstein*** (although I've searched in vain for a copy of this, so it may be deleted). Also in the series for some bizarre reason is ***Zoltan Hound of Dracula*** which is definately NOT a Hammer film.

Also available on various labels are ***Revenge of Frankenstein, Phantom of the Opera, Demons of the***

Mind, Curse of the Mummy's Tomb, The Gorgon, Plague of the Zombies, Frankenstein Created Woman, Countess Dracula, Hands of the Ripper, Vampire Circus and ***Twins of Evil***.

The following listings are by no means a definitive list, rather a rough guide to what's available. It may be that some of these titles are now deleted or unavailable for one reason or another. Any additions to the list would be more than welcome.

DRACULA PRINCE OF DARKNESS

Directed by Terence Fisher 1966

Cast: Christopher Lee, Andrew Keir, Barbara Shelley, Francis Matthews, Suzan Farmer, Charles Tingwell, Thorley Walters, Philip Latham, Walter Brown.

After a gap of 8 years, Christopher Lee eventually returned to the role that catapulted him to international stardom. Sadly missing this time round was Van Helsing in the form of Peter Cushing. Instead we are introduced to the vampire hunting Father Shandor superbly played by Andrew Keir. For some unexplicable reason Lee is given no lines whatsoever and is reduced to hissing and snarling throughout the film (although one story says that Lee was given dialogue, but it was so bad he refused to use it). Dracula is also given a red lined cloak as oppossed to the all black one he wore in the original film, which gave him a more bat like appearance.

Despite this, I can't help liking the film. Barbara Shelley especially gives a very convincing portrayal of a prim and proper Englishwoman who is turned into a snarling, sensual vampire. Unfortunately the same can't be said for the female lead Suzanne Farmer who gives a particularly wooden performance.

There are some nice references to Bram Stoker's original novel, especially in the character played by Thorley Walters, based on Stoker's Renfield character; and in the scene where Dracula opens his chest and trys to force Farmer to drink his blood. The ending is particularly inventive as Dracula is trapped on the moat outside his castle as the ice is shot from underneath him, sending him to a watery grave.

87 minutes Warner Home Video

DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE

Directed by Freddie Francis 1968

Cast: Christopher Lee, Rupert Davies. Veronica Carlson, Barbara Ewing, Barry Andrews, Ewan Hooper, Michael Ripper.

Dracula is resurrected from his watery grave by the blood of the local priest and proceeds to wreak vengence on a Monsignor and his family. Some fine atmospheric sets and a ver gory finale as Dracula is impaled on a giant golden cross. See review elsewhere in this issue.

88 minutes Warner Home Video

87 minutes
Warner Home Video

SCARS OF DRACULA
Directed by Roy Ward Baker 1970
Cast: Christopher Lee, Dennis Waterman, Wendy Hamilton, Jenny Hanley, Christopher Matthews, Anoushka Hempel, Patrick Troughton, Michael Gwynn, Michael Ripper.

Strangely, this film doesn't follow on from the previous movie, as Dracula is back in his castle in Transylvania (for the first time since ***Prince of Darkness***). Christopher Matthews (below) is the unwary traveller who ends

TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA
Directed by Peter Sasdy 1969
Cast: Christopher Lee, Linda Hayden, Geoffrey Keen, Gwen Watford, Peter Sallis, Anthony Corlan, Isla Blair, John Carson, Michael Ripper, Ralph Bates.

Set in England this time, the Count is brought back by one of his disciples Lord Courtley (superbly over acted by the late Ralph Bates). He sets out to destroy the three 'respectable' gentlemen responsible for Courtley's death. The instruments of his destruction are the men's own children (including Linda Hayden who seemed to drop out of sight after making this film and the wonderful ***Blood On Satan's Claw*** - any info on her would be appreciated). The church scenes are very atmospheric but Dracula's death is a little unusual - he falls onto an altar and dies! Watch out for the late Roy Kinnear in a smashing cameo as the man who collects Dracula's ring and blood.

up in Castle Dracnla and falls victim to gorgeous vampire Anoushka Hempel. His brother (played by Dennis Waterman with the strangest accent I've evar beard) and his girlfriend (Jenny Hanlay - remember her from Magpia?) arrive at the castle after encountering the usual bostility at tbe local inn.

They manage to escape with belp from Dracula's servant Klove (Patrick Troughton - the best ever Dr Who for my money), but Jenny Hanley is soon recaptured by Dracula who dies when struck by lightmng (!). Gorgeous sets and quite a nice return to Hammer's earlier gothic style. The best scene, taken straight from Bram Stokers novel, is Lee climbing vertically up the castle wall. Just try and ignore the rubber bats!

92 minutes. Warner Home Video

DRACULA AD 1972
Directed by Alan Gibson 1972
Cast: Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Stephanie Beacham, Michael Coles, William Ellis, Christopher Neame, Caroline Munro.

The beginning of the end for Hammer's Dracula series. A truly appaling film with only the prologue and Lee and Cushing's acting making it worth watcbing. To be fair the idea of bringing Dracula to the (then) present day was forced on Hammer by Warner Brotbers. In retrospect it was disastrous and the film looks terribly dated now. The movie opens with a super prologue as Dracula and Van Helsing battle it out in Hyde Park of 1872. Dracula is eventually staked through the heart by a broken wheel.

One hundred years later, and Dracula is brought back by a black mass in the desecrated church of St Bartophs. The instigator of the mass is yet another disciple Johnny Alucard (I always wondered why it took Van Helsing so long to figure out the anagram). Determined to avenge himself on Van Helsing's descendants he eventually kidnaps his granddaughter Jessica (Stephanie Beacham) but is killed by Cushing in a pit of stakes.

There are some interesting bits, like Alucard being killed in a shower,giving a modern slant to the legend that running water is fatal to a vampire. The film works best when in the eerily gothic church, but one can't help wondering why on earth Dracula stayed there when there was all of London to stalk.

92 minutes. Warner Home Video

THE SATANIC RITES OF DRACULA
Directed by Alan Gibson 1973
Cast Christopher Lee, Peter Cushing, Michael Coles, William Franklyn, Freddie Jones, Joanna Lumley

Actually a much better film than its predessesor. This time Dracula is

planning to wipe out the world with a virulent strain of plague (and thereby presumably commit suicide). Van Helsing once again manages to stop him and lures him into a hawthorne bush before staking him. I'm not convinced Dracula, who had lived for centuries, would have so easily been fooled into running into a bush! But at least it was different. The scenes of the vampire women chained in the cellar were quite effective and Christopher Lee had a bit more to say than usual, but it was a sad end to the Dracula saga.

84 minutes Warner Home Video

THE CURSE OF FRANKENSTEIN

Directed by Terence Fisher 1957

Cast: Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Robert Urquhart, Hazel Court, Valerie Gaunt, Noel Hood, Marjorie Hulme, Melvyn Hayes.

The film that started it all. Cushing is the definitive Baron Frankenstein, stitching together his creature from bits of dead bodies. The scene where the Baron rushes into his laboratory and is confronted by the new-born monster ripping off its bandages is a classic of the genre. Jimmy Sangster who did the screenplay went back to Mary Shelley's original novel for inspiration. Because Universal Pictures wouldn't allow their Frankenstein make-up to be copied, Phil Leaky (Hammer's make-up man) had to devise a whole new concept. There is little of the pathos of Karloff's monster, in fact it's very hard to feel any sympathy for Lee's creature at all. The epitomy of gothic cinema which Hammer was to make its own over the next two decades. It was heavily criticised at the time of its release for all the gore. A true classic.

80 minutes Warner Home Video

THE REVENGE OF FRANKENSTEIN

Directed by Terence Fisher 1958

Cast: Peter Cushing, Francis Matthews, Eunice Grayson, Michael Gwynne, Lionel Jeffries.

Fisher, without doubt Hammers greatest director, returned to create an unusual sequel to ***The Curse of Frankenstein***. Whereas in the Universal films it was the monster who linked the films, Hammer made the Baron himself the link. He was once again played by the wonderful Peter Cushing. Saved from the guillotine he faced at the end of the first film, the Baron is up to his old tricks again, this time seemingly succeeding. However his creation (marvellously played by Michael Gwynn) is injured in a fight and degenerates into cannabilism. Probably one of

the most thought provoking films of the series proving you don't need a shambling monster to make a good Frankenstein movie.

87 minutes Warner Home Video.

FRANKENSTEIN CREATED WOMAN
Directed by Terence Fisher 1966
Cast: Peter Cushing, Thorley Walters, Susan Denberg.

My personal favourite of the series, possibly because it was the first time my parents allowed me to stay up to watch a Hammer horror on late night tv when I was a kid. This is everything that made Hammer great - Fisher's direction, superb sets, Cushing as the Baron and a wonderful gothic feel to the whole thing. The story deals with soul transference this time with the Baron putting the soul of a man wrongly executed for murder into the rebuilt body of his girlfriend (confused yet?) The soul of the dead man uses the woman's body to avenge him(her)self on the three toffs who actually committed the original murder (now I think I'm confused!). Cushing is, as usual, superb and Thorley Walters is just right as his bumbling assistant.

87 mins Castle Pics

FRANKENSTEIN MUST BE DESTROYED
Directed by Terence Fisher 1969
Cast: Peter Cushing, Simon Ward, Veronica Carlson, Maxine Audley, Thorley Walters, Freddie Jones.

Hammers fifth Frankenstein again teamed Fisher and Cushing. The Baron is at it again! This time he's a downright nasty piece of work, even raping Veronica Carlson in one scene. I think this scene just didn't fit and was totally out of character for the Baron. Freddie Jones gives a very sympathetic portrayal as the man whose brain is in someone else's body. This film was followed by the only non-Cushing Frankenstein, the tongue-in-cheek ***Horror of Frankenstein***.

97 minutes Warner Video

LUST FOR A VAMPIRE
Directed by Jimmy Sangster 1970
Cast: Ralph Bates, Suzanna Leigh, Michael Johnson, Barbara Jefford, Yutte Stensgaard, Mike Raven.

Originally to be directed by Terence Fisher, who withdrew because of a broken leg, and to have starred Peter Cushing in Ralph Bate's role (he didn't make the film due to the illness of his beloved wife Helen), one can only wonder what the film might have looked like. It's doubtful that even Fisher could have got a good performance from Yutte Stensgaard, who looked gorgeous but couldn't act to save her life.

The film is a sequel to Hammer's earlier ***Vampire Lovers***, and is once again based on J. Sheridan Le

PETER CUSHING · SUSAN DENBERG
THORLEY WALTERS
Now Frankenstein has created
A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN WITH THE SOUL OF THE DEVIL!
FRANKENSTEIN CREATED WOMAN

Fenu's novel *Carm* a Set in a girls finishing school (which gives plenty of excuse for nudity!) the story concerns the anagramous vampiress Carmilla (Stensgaard) who preys on her fellow schoolmates She is brought back from the dead by Mike Raven, whose eyes in close up look suspiciously like Christopher Lees! After the obligatory bloodletting Carmilla is impaled by a burning rafter Nice atmosphere but an absolutely appaling 'pop song in the middle of the film, which to give him his due, Sangster fought hard to have removed.

85 minutes Warner Home Video

DR. JEKYLL & SISTER HYDE

Directed by Roy Ward Baker
1971
Cast Ralph Bates Martine Beswick Gerald Sims Lewis Fiander Dorothy Alison Neil Wilson

An intriguing twist to an old story helped considerably by the remarkable likeness between Ralph Bates and Martine Beswick Thrown in for good measure are elements of Burke and Hare and Jack the Ripper Jekyll's potion turns him into the beautiful but evil Sister Hyde who in turn kills prostitutes to provide bodies for the good doctors

experiments. Well acted all round with the screenplay by Brian Clemens, more famous for his *Avengers* TV series.

94 minntes Warner Home Video

VAMPIRE CIRCUS
Directed by Robert Young 1971
Cast: John Moulder Brown, Adrienne Corri, Laurence Payne, Thorley Walters, Lynne Frederick, Elizabeth Seal, Anthony Corlan.

One of Hammers best films at a time the studio was rapidly on the downward slope. The vampires this time are occupants of a travelling circus who can turn into animals at will. Actually quite a gory film, especially the ending where just about the entire cast get killed. This film will he featured in greater length in a future issue.

83 minutes Video Collection

CURSE OF THE MUMMYS TOMB
Directed by Michael Carreras 1964
Cast: Terence Morgan, Ronald Howard, Fred Clark, Jeanne Roland, George Pastell, Jack Gwillim, Dickie Owen, Michael Ripper.

The second in Hammers mummy series and while not as good as *The Mummy* it stands as an entertaining and well made film in its own right. The well worn story of the mummy heing brought hack to avenge the desecration of a tomb is given a new twist by the fact that the mummy's centuries old brother is alive and well in Victorian London. There's a great ending in the sewers heneath the city where the mummy kills himself and his hrother hy pulling down the roof.

81 minutes RCA

THE GORGON
Directed by Terence Fisher 1964
Cast: Peter Cushing, Christopher Lee, Barbara Shelley, Richord Pasco, Michael Goodliffe, Patrick Troughton.

After remaking the classic monster films of Dracula, Frankenstein and the Mummy, Hammer decided to create a completely new monster and looked to ancient Greece for inspiratioa. A very strong cast and Fishers usual superb direction make this an above average horror film. Peter Cushing for a change plays Dr Namaroff the haddie, while Christopher Lee gets to play the good guy in the form of Professor Meister. Carla, the woman possessed of the gorgons spirit is played hy the

VAMPIRE CIRCUS
VAMPIRE CIRCUS ADRIENNE CORRI · LAURENCE PAYNE THORLEY WALTERS
JOHN MOULDER-BROWN and ANTHONY CORLAN LYNNE FREDERICK
PG

COLUMBIA PICTURES presents
A HAMMER FILMS Production
The Gorgon
PETER CUSHING · CHRISTOPHER LEE
RICHARD PASCO · BARBARA SHELLEY
MICHAEL GOODLIFFE
JOHN GILLING
ANTHONY NELSON KEYS · TERENCE FISHER
TECHNICOLOR
A VENTURE INTO THE DEEPEST, STARKEST REALMS OF THE SUPERNATURAL...

beautiful Barbara Shelley, a stalwart of Hammer films in the sixties. She didn't actually get to play the role of the Gorgon herself due to the problems of costume and make-up changes (the part was played by Prudence Hyman). Well worth a viewing, one of the Hammer classics.

83 minutes RCA

PLAGUE OF THE ZOMBIES

Directed by John Gilling
1965
Cast: Andre Morell, Diane Clare, Jacqueline Pearce, John Carson, Brook Williams, Michael Ripper.

Generally regarded as one of the true classics, not just of Hammer, but of the genre as a whole. Made back to back with Gilling's other Cornish horror ***The Reptile***, it tells the story of strange goings on and dissapearing bodies in a small Cornish village. The man behind all this is the deliciously evil Squire Hamilton played superbly by John Carson. Unfortunately Diane Clare's performance is particularly wooden and you can't help wishing that Jacqueline Pearce wasn't given that role instead. Michael Ripper, as always, gives his role all he's got. What Hammer film would be complete without a performance from Michael?

Undoubtedly the best scene in the film is the dream sequence in the graveyard. The zombies pushing themselves up from their graves is one of the truly great scary moments from cinema history. It has been much copied but, in my opinion, never equalled. And isn't it nice to see a film that shows foxhunters as the nasty bastards they are.

87 minutes Warner Home Video

COUNTESS DRACULA
Directed by Peter Sasdy 1971
Cast: Ingrid Pitt, Nigel Green, Sandor Eles, Maurice Denham, Peter Jeffrey, Patience Collier, Lesley-Anne Down.

Despite the very misleading title this is a rather good little historical horror film. Based on V Penrose's novel ***The Bloody Countess*** it tells the story of the real life muderess Countess Elisabeth Bathory. Bathory was responsible for the torture and murder of hundreds (no one knows for sure how many) of women in the belief that the blood of virgins could keep her young. Her bloody exploits were finally brought to an end when she was tried, found guilty and walled up inside her castle (she escaped execution, the fate of her accomplices, due to her noble birth).

Sasdy's version loosely follows the same events with the difference that here the Countess actually becomes younger! The film marked a welcome return to the screen for Ingrid Pitt who gave a very convincing portrayal For its time it was a particularly gory film, but it was so well made, with obvious care to detail, that it's a shame Hammer never got round to making their other proposed historical horror ***Vlad the Impaler***

89 minutes Video Collection

HANDS OF THE RIPPER
Directed by Peter Sasdy 1971
Cast: Eric Porter, Jane Merrow, Angahard Rees, Dora Bryan, Keith Bell, Derek Godfrey, Lynda Baron.

In view of the fact that this was one of Hammers goriest films, I was surprised to see it only got a '15' certificate on video. Another interesting film that mixes the Whitechapel murderer (or at least his daughter) and Freudian analysis (as espoused by Eric Porters character). There are some very bloody murders indeed: Dora Bryan is pinned to the door with a poker; Lynda Baron's prostitute has a handful of pins shoved in her eye; a maid has a broken mirror stuck in her throat; and even Porter is impaled with a sword The cause of all this mayhem is the Ripper's daughter (Angahard Rees), who when she sees a shiny object and is kissed (raminders of the night her father killed her mother) turns into a homicidal maniac. She is eventually induced by the dying Porter to jump to her death from the Whispering Gallery of St Pauls Cathederal Not one of Hammers best but still worth a look.

85 minutes Rank Video

TWINS OF EVIL
Directed by John Hough 1971
Cast: Peter Cushing, Dennis Price, Isobel Black, Mary Collinson, Madeline Collinson, Damien Thomas, Katya Keith, David Warbeck.

Third in Hammers Carmilla trilogy and a thoroughly enjoyable film mixing puritanism, witch hunting and vampirism. It features one of my favourite of all vampires Count Karnstein, as played by Damien Thomas (who incidentally would have made an excellent replacement for Christopher as Dracula).

Peter Cushing is outstanding as Gustav Weil, the fanatical leader of the Brotherhood. Indeed in this film the 'instruments of God' are just as nasty as the vampires. Former Playboy Playmates, the Collinson twins are there more for their looks than their acting abilities. There are some fine set pieces, especially in Karnstein Castle and the finale is one of the most memorable ever put on film by Hammer. A film that provided plenty of good moments (and countless photos for Monster Mag!). This is what Hammer films were all about.

83 minutes Rank Video

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
Directed by Terence Fisher 1962
Cast: Herbert Lom, Edward de Souza, Heather Sears, Michael Gough, Ian Wilson.

After remaking most of Universals classic horror films, Hammer turned to their 'Phantom of the Opera' and ended up with their 1st financial failure. It was based more on the Claude Raines version than Lon Chaney's superb performance with Herbert Lom as the disfigured composer living this time, under a London Opera House, which unfortunately looks more like a music hall. Lom,s Phantom is a sympathetic character, eventually giving his life to save his beloved Christine (Sears) from a falling chandelier. This might have been the film's downfall as the public just didn't want sympathetic

'monsters'. Despite this it is a classic example of Hammer (& Fisher) at their best and Herbert Loms performance can't be faulted.

81 minutes CIC

TO THE DEVIL A DAUGHTER

Directed by Peter Sykes 1976
Cast: Christopher Lee, Richard Widmark, Denholm Elliot, Anthony Valantine, Natassja Kinski, Honor Blackman.

Hammers final horror film, featuring a fine cast who are largely wasted. Based on Dennis Wheatleys novel it came a couple of years too late to jump on the ***Exorcist*** bandwagon. The ending didn't help either. Instead of the death of the satanic priest (Lee) as described in the book, the film simply has Christopher Lee being hit on the head with a rock and dying! A sad end for the House of Horror

89 minutes Warner Home Video

QUATERMASS AND THE PIT

Directed by Roy Ward Baker 1967
Cast: Andrew Keir, Barbara Shelley, James Donald, Julian Glover

By far the best of Nigel Kneales Quatermass quartet and for my money about the best and most intelligent science fiction film of the sixties Andrew Keir plays Proffessor Bernard Quatermass this time round, replacing Brian Donlevy who essayed the role in *The Quatermass Xperiment* and

Quatermass 2. Excavation work at Hobbes End underground station unearths fossils of primitive humans dating back 5 million years (the film was called ***5 Million Years to Earth*** in the US) along with what is at first thought to be an enexploded bomb.

The bomb turns out to be a martian spaceship, also 5 million years old, that crashed when London was just a swamp. The evil forces inside the ship are soon revived and leashed on an unsuspecting London. Barbara Shelley, as ever, is excellent in a very dramatic role, as is Julian Glover as the stubborn Colnel Breen. A very different Hammer film but highly recommended.

94 minutes Warner Home Video.

THE DEVIL RIDES OUT

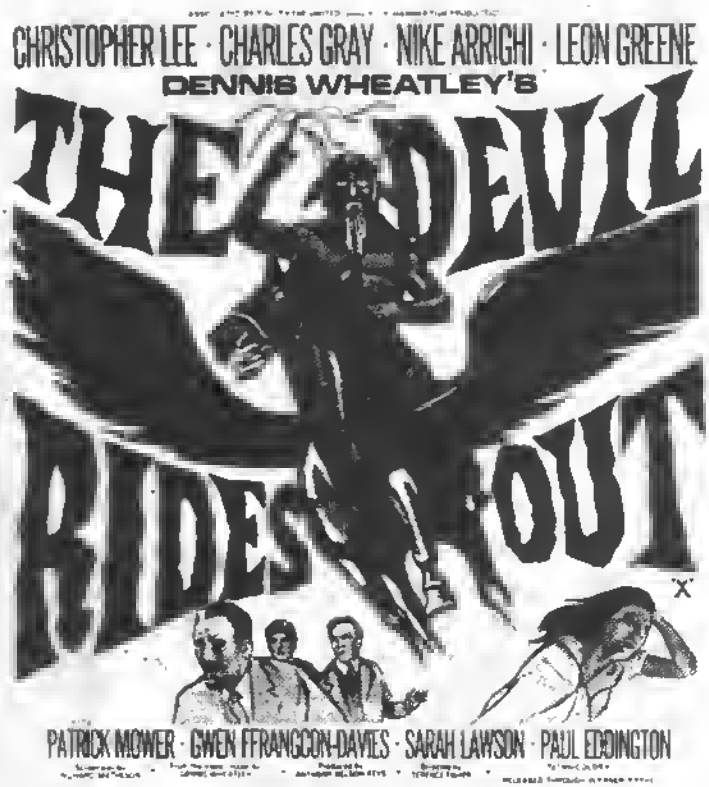
Directed by Terence Fisher 1967

Cast: Christopher Lee, Charles Gray, Patrick Mower, Paul Eddington, Nike Arrighi, Leon Greene.

Without a doubt the Duc de Richleau is the best character Christopher Lee has ever played, after Lord Summerisle in ***The Wicker Man***. For once on the side of good, Lee battles the powers of evil as personified by Mocata, brilliantly played by Charles Gray. This was to be the first in a series of adaptions of the works of Dennis Wheatley.

The film did very well in Britain, but not so good in the crucial US market (where it was known as ***The Devil's Bride***), leading Hammer to scrap any further adaptions, which is a shame because the film for me is one of Hammer and Fisher's best. In particular, the scene inside the magic circle is memorable as Mocata sends all the forces of hell against de Richleau and his friends, culminating in the Angel of Death himself. Wheatley himself was reported to be pleased with Richard Matheson's adaption of his book, which remains pretty faithful throughout.

92 minutes Warner Home Video


CHRISTOPHER LEE · CHARLES GRAY · NIKE ARRIGHI · LEON GREENE
DENNIS WHEATLEY'S
THE DEVIL
RIDES OUT
X
PATRICK MOWER · GWEN FFRANGCON-DAVIES · SARAH LAWSON · PAUL EDDINGTON

DAWN OF THE DEAD

Dawn of the Dead, made in 1978 and the second film in George A. Romero's zombie trilogy proved to be o success worldwide ond it's popularity remains intoct to this day. Much of this success, I feel, in America ot least, con be attributed to the closeness to which Romero tapped into the onxieties of the nation ot the time.

The climate in the 1960's and through to the end of the 1970's hove been cited os among the most traumatic decades in Americon history. The 70's were still echoing from the sequence of politicol assasinations and violent confrontations on the streets between blacks and other groups thot occurred in the 60's. The Vietnom Wor, costly, frustrating, ond ultimately unsuccessful, plunged the nation into turmoil, while shattering the illusion of American omnipotence. Meanwhile America's economic supremacy was being eroded: there was mounting concern over Inflotion, unemployment ond the threot of on energy shortoge. These experiences left Americans divided ond unsure of themselves. Some corried the rebelliousness to the point of questioning the very morol ond economic foundations of American society.

When George Romero was moking his horror film he said "I got into my own ego thing on how ***Night of the Living Dead*** reflected the time it was mode.....I wonted ***Dawn*** to reflect the 70's a bit more". It wos therefore o conscious effort by him to comment on the mood of the notion ot that time. The themes on which he concentrotes link directly to the American psyche ot the time, thot of the uncertainty of the stability of society and social roles ond the focus on moterialism ond consumerism.

In order to understand more fully how ***Dawn of the Dead*** achieves Romero's objectives and the woy in which it acts upon the spectotor it is important to explore the way in which horror works. For the audience sitting in the dorkness the sort of involvement the film invites necessitates o certoin switching off of consciousness and o losing of oneself in fontasy. This factor ond the generol agreement that horror films should not be token too seriously

means that subversive implications and concern for reforming aspects of the social system can escape detection.

In ***Dawn of the Dead*** Romero satirizes society through presenting the idea that not only are the zombies the product of normality, but that it is no longer possible to view normality itself as other than monstrous. The monsters are represented by the zombies but because social apocalypse has occurred at the beginning of the film they are not presented as a threat to 'normality', rather as part-and-parcel of it. This idea can be seen at the beginning of the film when the television studio is on the verge of collapse. The insinuation is that the collapse was more a result of human pettiness and lack of cooperation than the actual zombie plague, when Fran says "We've blown it ourselves". Later on Peter remembers how his grandfather used to tell him "When there's no more room in hell... the dead will walk the earth", a further reference to the theme of mans lack of morality as responsible for the apocalypse.

With the discovery of the mall Romero continues the central theme of portraying the system as lacking in morality. Romero is presenting the mall as a symbol for the cheap, materialistic values that so often take precedence over traditional, romantic, moral and spiritual ideals of the twentieth century. Romero clearly views his protagonists takeover of the mall as a hollow victory in this light. For one thing the place comes at a high price - Roger is bitten by a zombie as he and Peter blockade the entrances, and he slides into a maniacal, psychatic state. Furthermore Romero's protagonists lose something of their own morality as they gun down the zombies remaining in the mall with zealous cruelty motivated by greed.

Once inside the mall Romero is able to portray consumerism specifically as being something that is monstrous. With gleeful irreverence he suggests that the zombies are the ultimate 'consumers' carried to the absurd extreme of consuming people. ***Dawn's*** liberal, graphic gore has a distinct thematic context in this regard. garish, brighter than life, day-glo blood splashes all over the place as zombies tear limbs and entrails from their victims and devour them like so many hamburgers from a fast food joint.

The zombies are dressed in the recognisable work clothes that define our role in a capatalist system. ie nurses, nuns, insurance salesmen, softball players and so on, and they all gravitate toward the mall to stagger through the main concourse, clumsily riding the escalators, shuffle across the skating rink and stare longingly through the windows at the human protagonists. Even when locked out of the mall they continue to hang around. The shopping mall setting and the zombie 'shoppers' take a wickedly funny, satirical bite at American consumerism, but the humour also serves to humanize the zombies to some extent and undermine the clearcut distinctions between humans and zombies.

Romero's intentions in undermining the difference between humans and zombies is to show that all possess similar negative and destructive elements and that consumerism and the capitalist system is the driving force responsible for them. Peter at one point observes "They're after the place, they don't know why.....they just remember... remember they wanna be here!". All three groups (zombies, protagonists and bikers) wish to possess and control the mall. They share a common conditioning, all are predators and all are contaminated and motivated by consumer greed. The motorcycle gang's mindless delight in violence and slaughter is

anticipated in the development of Roger who delights in slaughtering zombies as a display to his friend and who, in the course of taking over the mall, is bitten and becomes a zombie himself. It is Stephen who ultimately cannot let go of the good life, represented by the mall, loses his cool and sets off a small scale war when he shoots one of the bikers. It is the zombies who win in the violent, gory climax, taking the violence of the zombies one step further by tearing the bikers to pieces.

Romero dismantles the system as we know it and in doing so releases his protagonists from the repressions that had previously governed them. More specifically it explores (and explodes) the two dominant couple relationships of our culture and its cinema, the hetrosexual couple (moving inevitably toward marriage and its traditional male/female roles) and the male 'buddy' relationship with its evasive denial of sexuality.

The hetrosexual couple (an embryonic family as Fran is pregnant) begins as a variation of the norm. They are not legally-married and the women is allowed a semblence of independence through her career; but as soon as the two are together the conventional assumptions operate. It is Stephen who flies the helicopter and carries a gun - the films major emblems of sexual/patriarchal authority. At various points in the narrative Fran nostalgically reenacts the role of female stereotype, making up her face as a doll-like image for the male gaze and skating alone on the huge ice rink - woman as spectacle without an audience.

However, in the course of the film Fran progressively assumes a genuine autonomy asserting herself against the men, insisting on possession of a gun and demanding to learn to pilot the helicopter. Romero makes it quite clear that she is only able to take on or satisfy her new found role by relinquishing her old one and this is necessary as the old social structure with all its value systems and expectations no longer applies. The pivotal scene is the parody of a romantic dinner with flowers and candlelight - the white couple being waited on by the black - where Fran rejects Stephen's ring, the symbol of traditional union, saying "We can't Stephen, not now, it wouldn't be real". The shot of them in bed afterwards staring into space illustrates how redundant their relationship has become like the thousand of dollars used for Peter and Stephen's poker game, it has no value because there is no longer a context for it.

Dawn of the Dead takes up and comments on the buddy relationship of countless Hollywood movies and the repression of the sexual undercurrents through the developing mutual attachment between Roger and Peter. Neither man shows any sexual interest in Fran, yet both are blocked by conditioning from admitting to any in each other. Hence the chanelling of Rogers energies into violence and aggression, his uncontrolled zest in slaughter presented as a display for his friend. The true nature of the relationship can be tacitly acknowledged only after Roger's death, in the symbolic orgasm of the spurting of the champogne bottle over his grove.

Both the films central relationships are broken by the death of one of the partners. The two who die are those who cannot escape the repressions of their conditioning whilst the survivors are those who have shown themselves capable of autonomy and self-awareness. Romero chooses not to provide a traditional happy ending where the two survivors become romantically attached,

this could well have the effect of restoring a conventional relationship with all the repressions associated with it Instead we have the woman piloting the helicopter as the man relinquishes his rifle to the zombies Romero brings his two surviving protagonists to the point where work can begin on creating norms for o new social order and a new structure of relationships - a context in which the presence of a [illegible] survivor. Fran's [illegible] child, points the way to potential change

The enormous success of the film suggests that audiences had become desensitised from watching real life horror in the form of news reports from Vietnam The film also provided a humourous form of escapism which was very much in tune with the times America was experiencing a social crisis but it was also a time of mass and mad consumerism Down of the Dead allowed the viewer to lose themselves in the 'gun happy', [illegible] world of the mall zombie while playing on their insecurities that [illegible]'s problems may begin in social [illegible]

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